

# Asking for a raise

Students engage in a scenario where they use the strategies of persuasive writing to write a professional letter asking for a raise.

## Learning goals

### Big idea

People can increase their income by acquiring more experience and job skills, which often leads to higher compensation.

### Essential questions

- When is the right time to ask for a raise?
- What's an effective way to ask for a raise?

### Objectives

- Understand how to properly prepare to ask for a raise
- Apply effective strategies when asking for a raise

## What students will do



- Explore the concept of persuasive writing.
- Write a letter asking for a raise from an imaginary boss.

## Preparing for this activity

- ☐ Print copies of all student materials for each student, or prepare for students to access them electronically.

### KEY INFORMATION

Building block:

-  Executive function
-  Financial knowledge and decision-making skills

Grade level: High school (9-12)

Age range: 13-19

Topic: Earn (Increasing earnings, Making money)

School subject: CTE (Career and technical education), English or language arts, Social studies or history

Teaching strategy: Simulation, Project-based learning

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Apply, Create

Activity duration: 45-60 minutes

### STANDARDS

Council for Economic Education  
Standard I. Earning income

Jump\$tart Coalition  
Employment and income - Standards 1 and 2

## What you'll need

### THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- Asking for a raise (guide)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_asking-raise\\_guide.pdf](#)

### STUDENT MATERIALS

- Asking for a raise (worksheet)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_asking-raise\\_worksheet.pdf](#)

## Exploring key financial concepts

As an employee, it's important to understand what's a fair amount of pay for the work you're doing. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes information on workers' pay and benefits. Generally, this information is categorized by geographic area (such as national, regional, state, metropolitan area, or county), occupation (such as teacher), and industry (such as manufacturing). Additional categories may also be used in some cases. Using these resources can give you information on what different occupations pay and help you compare your pay with other similar occupations.

While it's helpful to become familiar with the typical pay for the type of work you're doing in your geographical area, it's also important to keep in mind that everyone brings unique skills and abilities to a job, and no two jobs are exactly alike. A worker's experience, skills, performance, successes, and location can cause variations in how much people receive for similar jobs.

No matter what your pay may be, there may come a time when you feel you deserve a raise. Perhaps you've just won the company a new client, you've taken on added responsibilities, or you've learned you're earning far less than the going rate. When this time comes, you'll want to prepare before you approach your employer with a request for a raise. No matter how much you feel you deserve a raise, you'll want to make your case and prove that you deserve the pay increase you're requesting.

### **TIP**

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Because terms and laws related to pay change, students should be encouraged to always look for the most up-to-date information.

## Teaching this activity

### Whole-class introduction

- Distribute the “Asking for a raise” worksheet.
- Ask students to discuss what they think it means when a worker gets a raise.
- Be sure students understand key vocabulary:
  - **Raise:** An increase in the amount of wages or salary.
  - **Salary:** Compensation received by an employee for services performed. A salary is a fixed sum paid for a specific period of time worked, such as weekly or monthly.
  - **Wage:** Compensation received by employees for services performed. Usually, wages are computed by multiplying an hourly pay rate by the number of hours worked.
- Introduce students to the concept of persuasive writing. Explain that:
  - Persuasion is when you’re able to convince someone to agree with your point of view.
  - Persuasive writing is a form of nonfiction writing with the aim of convincing readers to believe in an idea or to do an action.
  - To do it well, persuasive writing requires careful word choice, the development of logical arguments, and a compelling summary that drives home the key points.

### Individual work

- Students will review the “Asking for a raise” worksheet.
  - They’ll first review the “Employee scenario.”
  - Then they’ll review the “Tips for asking for a raise.”
  - Finally they’ll review the “Tips for persuasive writing.”
- Using the information in their worksheet, students will write a letter asking for a raise.

### Wrap-up

- Bring students back together to discuss what was challenging and what was fun about the task of asking for a raise.

- Ask them to share some things they learned about when and how to ask for a raise.
- Ask them to share their answers to the reflection questions.

## Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other activities that address the topics of earning, including making money and increasing earnings.

## Measuring student learning

Students' letters can give you a sense of their understanding of how to apply the strategies of persuasive writing while asking for a raise. **Keep in mind that students' answers may vary.** The important thing is for students to have reasonable justification for their answers.

If you choose to use the scoring rubric below to grade this activity, be sure to share it with all students so they know what criteria matter most and they can plan accordingly.

### SCORING RUBRIC

Criteria	Possible points	Points earned
<b>Introduction:</b> The introduction is respectful and engaging. It clearly states your request for a raise and provides an overview of why you deserve one.	20	
<b>Organization:</b> Your letter presents the information and your arguments in a logical way that builds a strong case.	20	
<b>Justification and evidence:</b> You provide at least three examples of evidence that support your request for a raise.	20	
<b>Audience:</b> The letter gives careful consideration to your audience (your boss or manager) and is respectful and professional.	10	
<b>Writing mechanics and word choice:</b> There are no spelling or grammar errors, and your choice of words and phrases supports your argument.	10	
<b>Conclusion:</b> The conclusion provides a strong summary and leaves the audience feeling compelled to agree with your argument.	20	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	